

ACUNA CACTUS
(*Echinomastus erectocentrus* var. *acunensis*)

STATUS: Proposed endangered (77 FR 60510, October 3, 2012) with critical habitat

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: Gray-green spherical cactus typically single-stemmed and with straight central spines. The cactus can be up to 40 centimeters (cm) (16 inches (in)) tall and 9 cm (3.5 in) wide with spine clusters borne on tubercles. Tubercles have a groove on the upper surface. There are 2-3 central spines and 12 radial spines. Radial spines are dirty white with a maroon tip. Rose, pink, or lavender flowers 3.6 to 6 by 4 to 9 cm (1.4 to 2.3 by 1.6 to 3.5 in) are produced in March. Immature plants look distinctly different from mature plants. Immature plants are disc-shaped or spherical and have no central spines until they are about 38 mm (1.5 in). Fruits are pale green (tan when dry) and 1.25 cm (.5 in) long. Fruits bear black rugose (wrinkled or creased) seeds.

HABITAT: Occurs in valleys and on small knolls and gravel ridges of up to 30 percent slope in the Palo-Verde-Saguaro Association of the Arizona Upland subdivision of the Sonoran Desert scrub at 365 to 1,150 m (1,198 to 3,773 ft) in elevation.

RANGE: Historic: Southern Arizona and northern Mexico.

Current: In Arizona found in Western Pima, Maricopa, and Pinal counties.

REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Current and ongoing modification and destruction of its habitat and range from long-term drought, effects of climate change, and ongoing and future border activities. Without management, urban development, livestock grazing, nonnative invasive plant species, unauthorized collection, and mining could occur at levels that threaten populations.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, State of Arizona, and private ownership.

NOTES: Protected by the Arizona Native Plant Law. Proposed as endangered with critical habitat (77 FR 60510, October 3, 2012) <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/Acuna.htm>.